

It began
with a
single page
marriage
registration...

IT'S
NOT EVEN
BEEN A YEAR
SINCE YOU
AND DAD
DIVORCED!

SYOUNGO-SAN,
WHY DO YOU
WANT TO GET
MARRIED
AGAIN?

IT
CAN'T BE
HELPED
IF I'VE
FALLEN
IN LOVE.

FORGET
ABOUT
THE
PAST.

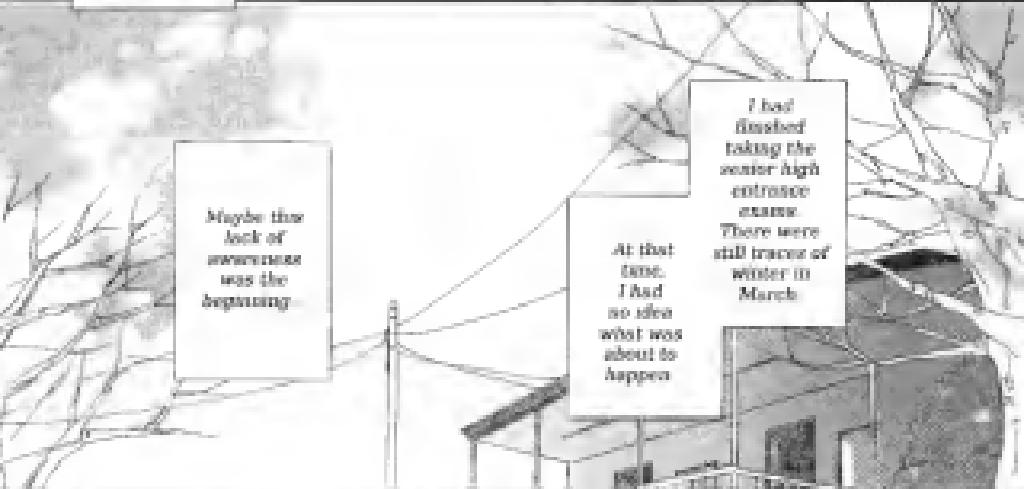
DON'T
THIS GUY
YOUNGER
THAN YOU?
WHAT IF HE
CHEATS AND
LEAVES
YOU?

IS
REASON-
ABLE.

NO DOUBT
ABOUT IT!
IF HE
MARRIES A
WOMAN, I
GUARANTEE
HE'LL LEAVE!

BUT A
MOTHER'S
DUTY...?

NO, I
HATE
PLEASE
FORGIVE
ME.
HE'S A
6,000
PERSON



I
think
about

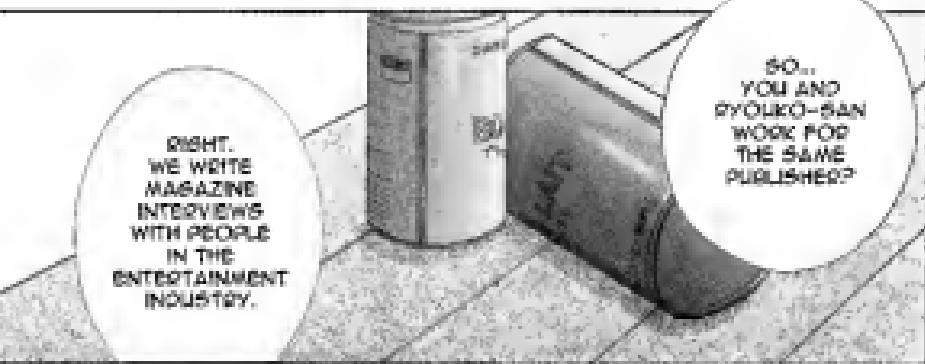
love,
yearning,
intimacy.

I'm on
that vague
border...

JU-ROKU

16





SO...
YOU AND
RYOICHO-SAN
WORK FOR
THE SAME
PUBLISHER?



YEAH, YEAH.
RYOICHO-SAN
GETS THE
POPULAR STARS.



YOSHIO-SAN
LOVES TO TALK,
SO THAT'S
PROBABLY
WHY THEY
GET ALONG.

SO...
SINCE THEN,
I HAVEN'T
MADE ANY
FRIENDS
AT SCHOOL.

LET'S SEE.
AFTER THE
DIVORCE,
I BECAME
PARTICULARLY
ABOUT
MAKING
FRIENDS.

YOU SEEM
LIKE A FRIEND
SO I'LL TELL
YOU ABOUT
MYSELF.

POP
KONNO-SEN,
CONVERSATION
IS EASY

HE'S AN
INTERVIEWER,
AFTER ALL

IT'S
NOT VERY
EASY TO
SHARE MY
FEELINGS

AND
THESE
SHOULDN'T
BE ANY
LIMITS IN
FRIENDSHIP,
RIGHT?

ANYWAY,
HOW MANY
GOOD GUYS
ARE THERE
IN THIS
AREA?

YOU
REALLY
BELIEVE
THAT?

AH...
I GET IT.
FRIENDSHIP
IS DIFFICULT
FOR YOU...

IS HE
MANIPULATING
MY FEELINGS..?

OH,
SORRY.
DO YOU
MIND IF I
SMOKE?

GO
AHEAD.



BUT
FALLING
IN
LOVE...

IS
EASY.



YOU
LIKE
GUYS,
HMM?



THOSE
WORDS
WERE
SIGNIFICANT...



OH
SORRY.
IT'S JUST...
I'M THINKING
ABOUT
RYOICHI-SAN...

SO...

"I WANT TO FEEL
COMFORTABLE,
LIKE I'M WITH
A FRIEND..."

YET FALL
DEEPLY
IN LOVE."

AAH...
I GET
IT.

I'M
BISEXUAL.
I THINK
IT'S BEST
TO HAVE
RELATIONSHIPS
WITH HUMAN
BEINGS.

When I
looked into
his eyes,
his words
were easy to
understand.

IT JUST
SO HAPPENS,
I'VE NEVER
FELT THAT
WAY ABOUT
A WOMAN,
UNTIL NOW

He's
a good
guy...

I want
to be
his
friend.



I like
you.
Kouno-san.

SO
IT'S TRUE,
THAT HOT GUY
IS IN LOVE
WITH YOU,
RYOICHO-SAN.

Kouno-san

HUH...?
YOU'RE
KIDDING!

TOO
BAD!
HE'S
TAKEN.

HE'S
SO
COOL!

WHAT
A
WASTE!

YOU'RE
GOING OUT
WITH A
GOOD
PERSON.

ROUO

BUT...
I'M GLAD,
RYOICHO-SAN.

Ryouko-san

Please
don't let
someone
cheat on
her again

The
least
I can
do is
make
this
wish.

You've
always
stood by
me when
I was weak

You
still
look
like a
young
woman.

NAOKI

ARE YOU
GOING TO
KOUNO-SAN'S
PLACE NEXT
WEEK?

I'M
GOING TO
LET YOU
KEEP THIS
MARRIAGE
CERTIFICATE,
NAOKI

WHEN
IT'S OKAY
WITH YOU,
I'LL GET
THE SEAL.

IT'S FINE
WITH ME.
I LIKE
KOUNO-SAN

PASS

HUMP
WHY?

YEAH
HE IS
SONNA
LEND
ME SOME
CD'S AND
VIDEOS.

HOW
YOU
FEEL
ABOUT
HIM.

I REALLY
WANT TO
KNOW...

Hahaha
SILLY... I
I'M NOT
FOOLED
BY OUTWARD
APPEARANCE!!

Dekoboko!

I TOLD
YOU! YOU'RE
DATING A
GOOD
GUY!

I WANT
TO SEE
THROUGH
YOUR EYES,
NAOJI.

I
COULD
TELL HER,
BUT SHE'D
TAKE IT THE
WRONG
WAY...





Suddenly,
I felt
intensely
aware...

Just
like
that, it
was
said...



INSTANTLY,
EVERYTHING
BECAME
REAL.

It's just that, when you said...

I could be the one...

IT'S NATURAL TO FEEL THAT WAY, DON'T YOU THINK?

FINDING YOURSELF THE TARGET OF SUCH THOUGHTS

I THINK IT'S NORMAL TO FEEL AWKWARD.

I'M STARTING TO FEEL TENSE...

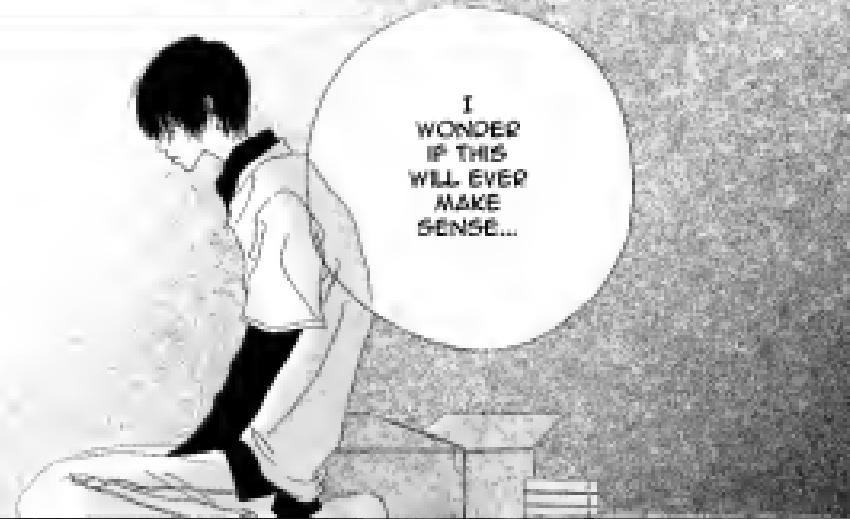
AM I IN TROUBLE?

I felt a little scared.

BUT, KOUNO-SAN, YOU'RE NOT THE KIND OF PERSON WHO...

I CAN ASSURE YOU EVERYTHING WILL BE ABSOLUTELY FINE BETWEEN US.

OF COURSE, I DON'T INTEND TO ACT ON IT.



I don't
understand
anything
about this
guy.

I see.
I...



"I don't
intend to
act on it."

Doesn't
imagine
his
expression

Then why
did he
say those
things in
the first
place?

He turned away...
This moment
speaks for itself.
I think I see now...

He's not
looking
at me.
His back



*Now...
what
am I
thinking?*

"NAOKI."

*The
third
possibility...*

*It's
me.*



*This
marriage
must be
stopped.*

*"That
I may
find
a male
lover?"*

WHAT
AM I
GOING
TO
DO?

WHAT
AM I
GOING
TO
DO?



"KOUNO
-SAN!"



WH...

WHAT
AM I
GOING
TO
DO?

That was
the second
time we'd
met and
talked.
It was
the only
time...

at the
end of my
fifteenth
year...
that
I'd felt
such a
powerful
attraction

The
season
of
flower
beds
arrived



NAOKI!

In
March
of that
Spring,
the cherry
Blossoms
began to
open

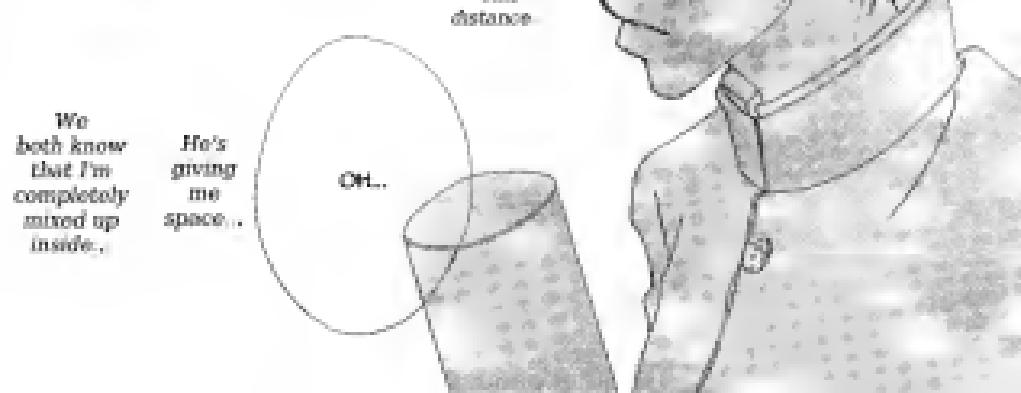
And I
outgrew
my
childish
ways

SURE.
THEY GAVE
ME A CAB
AND SAID I
COULD LEAVE
EARLY.

IS IT
OKAY TO
LEAVE
WORK?

RYOKO -SAN
-
I
SAID
YOU
DON'T
HAVE
TO
COME.

NO WAY,
NO WAY...
I WOULDN'T
MISS IT!





I want
to meet
and talk
with him
again,
so become
friends,

I think
I like
Kouno-san.
My feelings...

Am I
doing
the
right
thing?

haven't
changed
suddenly.



"Until now,
I've never
felt that
way about
a woman."



"I'm bisexual...
It's best to have
relationships with
human beings."



Ryouko-san
loves the
person
I like.

Ryouko-san
is loved
by the
person
I like.



It's
really
frustrating
that he
doesn't
feel that
way about
me...

NAOKI



Why
did
I say
I want
to see
him
again?

THIS
WON'T
DO AT
ALL.
NAOKI

Could
the three
of us have
gotten
along like
friends?

If things
had stayed
the same,
like the
first time
we met...

YOU TRY
TO SEE A
PERSON'S
GOOD
POINTS
RIGHT
AWAY...

BUT
KEEPING
YOUR
THOUGHTS
TO YOURSELF
MAKES ME
WORRY.



YOU'RE DOING THIS BECAUSE YOU LOVE US, RIGHT?

BOTH ME AND KOUNO -SAN.

HA, YOU ANSWERED!

YOU'RE SO CUTE! I REALLY LOVE YOU, NAOIYA

HUH?

IS IT LOVE?

COME ON...

COULD IT BE LOVE?



Perhaps...
I want to
become
like that,
too.

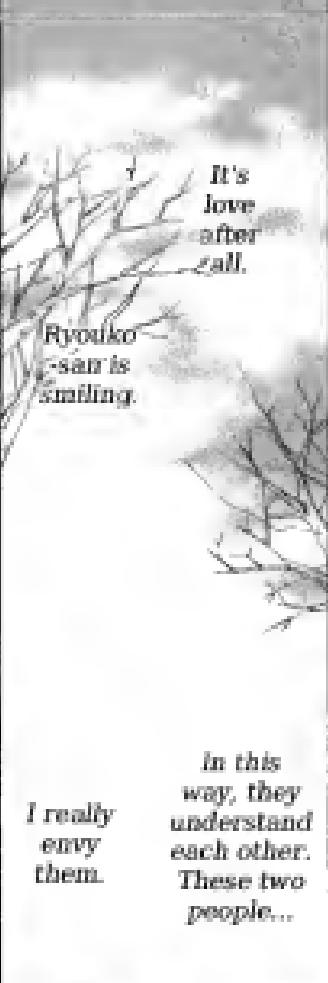
I really
envy
them.

THAT'S
SOME
CONSO-
LATION!

No,
no,

In this
way, they
understand
each other.
These two
people...

RYOUKO
-SAN...



I hate
to admit
it, but...





THAT'S
NOT
IT

AT FIFTEEN,
YOU'RE OLD
ENOUGH TO
BECOME AN
OBJECT OF
LOVE.

WEREN'T
YOU A LITTLE
UNFAIR TO
ME, TOO?

YOU JUST
ASSUMED A
FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLD
COULDN'T BE
YOUR PARTNER.

WELL,
AT THAT
TIME, IN THAT
ROOM, WOULD
IT HAVE BEEN
OKAY FOR
ME TO DO
SOP

BUT
...
YOU SAID
YOU NEVER
INTENDED
TO SEE ME
THAT WAY

I
SAID
THAT
BECAUSE
...
IF I HAD
DONE SUCH
A THING,
WOULDN'T
YOU HAVE
BEEN
WORRIED
ALL THE
TIME?

I THINK
I LIKE
YOU
A LOT,
NAOKI.

BUT
...

I
THOUGHT,
WHAT IF IT
HAPPENED
...?

AND
WHAT
WOULD
I DO?
I
COULDN'T
ESCAPE
IT.
I...

IT'S
OKAY.
I'M
HAPPY.

I CAN
DO THIS...
JUST SEE
YOU AGAIN.



"Nanako"

I
CONNECT
WITH YOU
LIKE A
FRIEND.

I'VE
FALLEN
IN LOVE
WITH YOU,
AND YET
...

WE'VE
MADE THAT
KIND OF
RELATIONSHIP,
I THINK.



You're
certainly
very special
to me,
Naoki.





I
WANT A
CONGRATULATORY
KISS!

OH!

IT'S
TOO
SOON

The
flowers
continued
to change
colors

and I still
didn't know
what the
seasons had
in store...

Very
soon,
I turned
sixteen,
and Spring
arrived

"Sixteen" ("Juroku")
by Yamagata Satomi,
from the manga
Kiss, Kiss, Kiss,
Miu Comics DX, 2003.

Scanner: presencedear
Editor: wondermilky
Translator: presencedear